

STELLA WRIGHT HOMES HOPE VI

"TRANSFORMING TODAY'S VISION INTO TOMORROW'S REALITY"

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TRANSFORMING Today's Vision into Tomorrow's Reality

"CHILDREN IN NEW JERSEY"

- New Jersey ranks 18th among states in percent of uninsured children.
 - New Jersey ranks 7th among the states in the percentage of children born into poverty.
 - New Jersey ranks 1st among states in total education expenditures per child.
- From the Children's Defense Fund

The statistics regarding the quality of life for children is dismal, in New Jersey and throughout the nation. In this issue, we've focused on education and its importance in the planning process for self-sufficiency for you and your family. The Newark Housing Authority, HOPE VI Staff, and the consultants, LST & North Ward, are committed to working with each family to preserve one of our most precious resources—our children.

NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS' MOTTO: "ALL CHILDREN WILL LEARN"



The mission statement for the Newark Public Schools (NPS) says, "As a result of the conscientious, committed, and coordinated efforts of staff, parents, and the community, all children will learn." The school system has set goals to improve writing skills, to increase 'reading stamina'—the amount of time and the length of reading selections, to improve academic achievement across all grade levels, and to raise the math proficiency of the district's students.

The Newark Public Schools have done much in the last few years to meet its commitment to every child. In this same period, many of the children who formerly lived in Stella Wright Homes have moved to one or more schools, requiring adjustment to new teachers, classmates, travel routines and the like. Ensuring that your child receives the highest quality of education requires some learning on your part as well, under these circumstances. Above all, it requires an active rather than a passive involvement as a parent.

To make sure your child receives the best education NPS has to offer, you should know the resources available in the school—reading and math enrichment programs, before or after school programs, recreational activities, computer literacy, ESL

classes, guidance counselors and medical professionals. With this information in hand, you will know what community resources you will need to access in order to provide your child the quality education he/she needs.

In a pamphlet soon to be released by NPS entitled "Ways For Parents To Be Involved In Their Child's Education," the following suggestions are given:

- Share expectations and set goals together for your child.
- Make appointments as needed to discuss your child's progress or concerns.
- Read classroom and/or school newsletters.
- Visit your school's web page.
- Know school staff's extensions and office hours.
- Learn school and district policies and practices that affect your child.
- Find out information on community resources and organizations and use them.
- Discuss your child's school day and homework daily with him/her.
- Provide a quiet, well lit place with basic school supplies for study/homework.
- Meet your child's friends and get to know their parents.
- Visit the local library often and take advantage of the many learning activities available usually free or at minimal cost through the library.
- Encourage and support older children in serving in student leadership positions.

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WE

WANT YOU TO JOIN A COMMITTEE

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

This committee will serve as the overall residents' Steering Committee giving guidance on the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI project.

HAYES HOMES SITE STELLA WRIGHT SITE HILL MANOR SITE

Each site will have a residents committee to work with the developers on the design of the sites (park and recreational space, parking spaces, streets) and the layout of the units.

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE:

The residents' social services committee will assist staff, consultants and the Community Supportive Services task force in identifying gaps in services, training, and educational services for the residents.



Each committee will meet quarterly, or as business dictates. Seven to nine residents are needed for each committee.

FROM THE DESK OF THE ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, DC, has as her theme "Leave No Child Behind." As we review and update the Community Supportive Services (CSS) Work Plan for providing self-sufficiency services to you, the former Stella Wright Homes residents, this theme is certainly paramount in our mind. Local, state, and federal officials may be busy counting such core items as job placements, GED, and homeownership—all of which are important goals to achieve. But we know that mothers (and fathers) cannot be productive workers or students if they don't know their children are in a quality, safe day care setting. Parenting increases stress if you don't know how to get the assistance your child needs to improve his/her reading or math skills. And hours spent away from home become a burden if you're not sure where your child will be once the school day

ends.

With this in mind, our CSS plan provides services for the entire family. Your case management team can give you the name of agencies that will help you locate safe day care or after school programs in your neighborhood. They can review your financial situation and advise you about subsidies for child care.

If you have children with special medical problems, have concerns about drugs or violence in your child's environment, or are unable to engage your child in good study habits without a constant quarrel, discuss these issues with your case management team and ask for their input and guidance.

The Newark Housing Authority Staff and its consultants, LST and the North Ward Center, are entering into important alliances with agencies throughout the City of Newark and Essex County to provide the quality

supportive services your families need. These programs are prepared to address issues of:

CHILD CARE

TRANSPORTATION

EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

AFTER SCHOOL

RECREATION

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

LIFE SKILLS

SELF-ESTEEM

TRUANCY

DRUGS

VIOLENCE

If you have any issues relative to your children's education, health or well-being, don't hesitate to call your case management counselor at North Ward to seek assistance.

**WE WANT NO CHILD
LEFT BEHIND.**

Karen Torian

NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT'S PROFILE (Data from the 2001-2002 Annual Report)

• Total Enrollment	42,241	• Total Graduates	1,666
Black	25,276	4 year college or university	526
Hispanic	12,964	2 year college or university	480
White	3,619	Other post-secondary education	173
Asian Pacific Is.	321	Government/Military	92
Amer. Ind/Alsk Native	61	Employment	232
• Total Number of Schools	76	Unemployed	34
Elementary—34; Middle—7;		Undecided	129
Senior High—10; Evening High—1;		• Graduates receiving scholarships	366
NJ Regional Day—1; Alternative—3.		• Scholarship dollars	\$7,345,626

**Mark your calendar for the next Residents' Consultative Group Meeting:
MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2002 AT 6:30 P.M., 57 Sussex Avenue, Third Floor Board Room.**

HELPFUL HINTS FROM SHEILA:

QUALITY EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT TO FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY



In discussions with the LST Mobility counselors, the North Ward Center's case management team and the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI staff, they've probably all been telling you that you need to develop a "family self-sufficiency" plan. As you work to develop your family self-sufficiency plan, you must be sure to incorporate a quality education for your children as a key component. Ensuring that your children receive a quality education is not a matter left to the school system alone. You must accept responsibility for your child's education also. This includes:

- ◊ Being an involved parent in your child's school;
- ◊ Ensuring that your child's after school facility meets his/her educational needs; and
- ◊ Promoting a well-

rounded child through wholesome recreational activities.

As an involved parent you should set appointments to meet the teachers to discuss with them your goals and

objectives for your child. You should tell the teacher your child's strengths—be his/her cheerleader. You should understand what the teacher's standards of excellence are and his/her expectations of your child. And you should come to an agreement with the teacher about the role you can play to ensure your child's success.

You can also support your child's success by participating in Parent-Teacher activity, by encouraging your child to join after school activities including clubs and organizations that promote team work and build self-esteem. Join other families at activities—plays, sports, etc.—at the school. And, finally, support fundraising activities sponsored by your school.

A child's success in school starts at home;

therefore, you should:

- ◻ Send your child to school in a happy mood.
- ◻ Make sure your child goes to school regularly.
- ◻ Set a regular time for your child to do homework and see that it is completed.
- ◻ Read to your child regularly.
- ◻ Expect and encourage your child to do his/her best and praise him/her often.
- ◻ Be informed about activities and events or deadlines by reading notices and other information from the school.
- ◻ Monitor your child's TV viewing and encourage watching the evening news or programs that will provide learning opportunities.
- ◻ Expose your child to a variety of activities that will create learning experiences.
- ◻ Send your child to bed at a reasonable hour.
- ◻ Listen to your child and respect his/her opinion.
- ◻ Know school rules and support and reinforce them with your child.

Sheila Scudder

Make Reading Fun

You can find opportunities in lots of small things to encourage your child to read and to make reading fun. Here is a list of things a child can read other than books and magazines:



Grocery Lists

Street Signs

Money

Stamps

Ads on TV

Menus

Cereal Boxes

T-Shirts

Newspapers

Toy Labels

Clocks

Fortune Cookies

Bumper Stickers

Toothpaste

Tickets

Postcards

Catalogs

Comic Strips

License Plates

Noroscopes

Phone Books

Coupons

Posters

Recipes

Maps



NEW FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

The Newark Housing Authority has established a new Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Department. The Department was created to provide all residents in public housing the opportunity to enroll in the FSS Program. (Previously the program had been available only to Section 8 residents.) The FSS program is another resource available to former Stella Wright residents to assist them in achieving their goals of self-sufficiency.

According to FSS Assistant Administrator Danny Gonzalez-Bosques, the program is an "umbrella of many services" that are individualized based upon each person's current status and future goals. The "umbrella" includes:

- A comprehensive needs assessment;
- Contract of participation with an individualized training and service plan;
- Consistent case management, counseling and follow-up;
- Special programs designed to address needs, i.e., career assessment, financial counseling, etc.;
- Referral services where applicable; and
- Establishment of an Individual Savings Account for qualifying families.

Also in future plans, the FSS Department, in collaboration with the IT and Family Services departments, plans to establish

technical learning centers at several sites around the City, some of which will be located at public housing sites. Some of the centers will be developed specifically for children while others will have combined usage by children and adults.

Whether your short or long term goals are education, job training, home ownership or financial independence, the FSS case managers will outline with you a step-by-step approach to success.

One of the major goals of the program is to assist residents with home ownership objectives if they have the interest and make the commitment to complete the contract they sign. Individual Savings Accounts will be established for qualifying families who experience an increase in earned income. Some accounts have grown to balances of \$15,000 over a 5-year timeframe.

Success in owning a home may include repairing your credit history, reducing your debt load, getting job training that leads to a higher paying job, or improving your value to your current employer so that the result is a pay increase. "We set goals and timeframes that are achievable," says Danny, "but the ultimate responsibility lies upon the resident's commitment to completing the contract." Because each participant is different, the amount of time for graduating varies for each resident.

If there are several adult family members in a single household, each one may work individually with FSS to develop a self-sufficiency plan. "All information is confidential," Danny stressed.

If you've worked with the LST or North Ward Center staffs and identified home ownership as a major goal, you need to contact the FSS manager immediately regarding your interest and plan to be at the next FSS orientation. While some of the steps (needs assessment and self-sufficiency planning) may seem repetitious, you can't have too much of a good thing—especially when there may be a pot of money for your down payment at the end of the rainbow. To contact the FSS staff, call 973-273-6681.



ACTION TOOLS

RESOURCES FOR YOUR USE

(NO FEES CHARGED FOR SERVICES)

- ⇒ **Home Ownership Counseling.** Sixteen-week sessions in HUD approved programs held monthly through the following agencies:

Catholic Community Services, 973-596-5118.

St. James Community Development Corporation, 973-482-5700.

- ⇒ **JOB FAIR, NOVEMBER 19**, at the Boys & Girls Club, 422 Broadway, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Local employers will be accepting resumes. For more information call Linda Nation-Wells at 973-482-5700. If you need help refining your resume, call Omyra at North Ward today!

- ⇒ **Employment Clinic, Every Monday, Wise Women's Center**, Essex County College, 303 University Avenue (entrance off Market Street across from Hall of Records). **Promptly at 10 a.m. to noon.** Career Assessment, educational exploration, resume writing, cover letters, thank-you letters, job search and interview skills. For information call Ingrid Fisher at 973-877-3457.

- ⇒ Lakesha Harris of the LST Group for Mobility Counseling at 973-642-8000.

- ⇒ Omyra Muniz of the North Ward Center for Case Management at 973-268-8900.





Six months after the implosion of the seven Stella Wright Homes buildings, demolition crews are busily compacting and removing the remnants of the buildings. Once their work is completed next quarter, the environmental evaluation and cleanup will begin.

FAMILY & FRIENDS MOURN DEATH OF MARY BRANCH

Former Stella Wright Resident Mary Ellen Branch died on Sunday, October 6, 2002. Ms. Branch was among the earliest Stella Wright residents, and she worked at the Newark Housing Authority for more than 20 years as building director before retiring in 1997.

Editor's Note: If you have news to share with other former Stella Wright Homes residents (births, deaths, graduations, etc.), call Nellie Dixon at 973-430-2162.

NEWS CORNER

Flu Shots Available Free

The City's Department of Health and Human Services is providing free flu shots to Newark residents. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you should get a flu shot each year if:

- You're over 50 years old.
- Adults and children who have chronic lung diseases, including asthma or heart disease
- Adults or children who suffer from kidney disease, sickle cell, or severe anemia.
- Pregnant women in their second or third trimester.

To find the location nearest you, call 973-733-7592 during the hours of 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS' MOTTO "ALL CHILDREN WILL LEARN"

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If you have concerns about your child's progress, you should discuss them first with your child's teacher. Other resources include the school administrators and/or the School Leadership Team.

Yes, you may have to read a few pages yourself to make sure you understand the opportunities and requirements. And there are numerous web sites available that provide learning enrichment projects and ideas for your child, including NPS' website (www.nps.k12.nj.us). Don't have a computer, your community library will allow access for you and your child. And the resources of your case management staff at North Ward are always available to you to locate additional services to serve your child.

See "Making Reading Fun" and "Helpful Hints From Sheila," both on page 3, for additional info on getting



CALLING ALL TEENS

The Family and Community Services Department is assisting youth in public housing sites in organizing a Teen Council that will be responsible for developing, planning and managing activities for teenagers throughout the Newark Housing Authority. One of the first activities is to conduct a survey to determine what activities teens really want in their neighborhoods. Based upon the results of the survey, the planning will begin.

It is important that all teens in public housing sites complete the survey in order to get a good picture of their interests. To join the Teen Council or to get a copy of the survey, call Recreation Coordinator Muhammad Westbrook at 973-430-2534. Let your voice be heard so that your needs can be reflected in the planning. In addition, your participation in the Teen Council would be a great way to build your leadership and organizational skills.

FREE OFFER

Mobility Counseling and Case Management Services designed to help you become self-sufficient are available to you and any member of your family ages 19 and older at no cost. If your son, daughter or other teen in your household has recently finished high school and needs direction on careers, job training or employment, have him/her call Onyria at North Ward for Case Management at 973-268-8900.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will I Be Able To Receive a Second Security Deposit If My Landlord Keeps The First One?

No. Under normal circumstances the Landlord would only keep your deposit if you had forfeited it by failure to pay rent or by damaging the apartment. In which case you would be responsible for making amends with the Landlord to the extent he/she would agree to return your deposit.

Can I Receive Monies For A Real Estate Broker's Fee?

According to the Housing Authority's Relocation Policy, only the "hard-to-house" can receive money for a real estate broker's fee. "Hard-to-house" is defined as families who require four bedrooms or more based upon right-size determinations or handicapped persons.

If I Lose My Job How Do I Go About Getting A Reduction In My Rent?

In order to qualify for rent reductions if you lose your job between recertifications, you must report the income decrease promptly to your Section 8 Caseworker or your site manager. An interim rent decrease will not be processed if the decrease will last less than 30 days.

Verification of the income decrease must be made, therefore you should present a termination letter or other information that shows your statement is true. Once Section 8 or Management has verified your circumstances, the rent decrease must be approved by the Executive Director or his/her designated authority.

If you are granted a rent reduction, you will be notified in writing of the effective date of the reduction. Rent reductions go into effect the first of the month following the approved change. Residents granted a reduction in rent may be required to



report for special recertification meetings with Housing Management. You must be sure to keep these appointments and to provide whatever proof requested.

If you misrepresent or fail to report to Management the accurate facts regarding your request for a decrease in rent, your increase in rent will be retroactive. In addition, failure to report accurate information is also grounds for initiating eviction procedures in accordance with NHA's lease.

If I Said No Originally To Receiving Mobility Counseling Or Case Management Services, Can I Change My Mind?

Yes, you can change your mind and request Mobility Counseling Services from the LST Group or Case Management Services from North Ward. You can also begin Case Management services and discontinue it after a while and later request to be reinstated into the program.

Our purpose with providing supportive services is to help you become self-sufficient. In that light, we know that circumstances change and we welcome the opportunity to provide quality services to you as a former Stella Wright Homes resident.

If you are enrolled in either Mobility Counseling or Case Management services and feel that personal circumstances may require you to stop participating, you should discuss these circumstances with the case worker before you leave the program. He/She might be able to help you find a solution to your problem so that you can continue participating in the program.

NEWS FLASH!

ST. JAMES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
THE APOSTLES HOUSE
THE NEWARK BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
& BROADWAY VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

INVITE YOU TO THEIR 6TH ANNUAL "CAREER DEVELOPMENT JOB FAIR"

DATE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2002

TIME: 9:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

LOCATION: The Newark Boys & Girls Club, 422 Broadway, Newark NJ 07104

AVAILABLE POSITIONS: Customer Service Reps, Administrative Assistants, Bank Tellers, Receptionists, Warehouse Workers, Data Entry & Much More.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS & BRING YOUR RESUMES

For more information, call 973-482-5700

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

It is important to be aware of some basic safety tips at Halloween to make sure that the fun doesn't get spoiled by an accident or injury. Below are things that should be followed by children when they "Trick-Or-Treat," by parents as they prepare their children to go out, and by homeowners.

TIPS FOR CHILDREN:

- Carry a flashlight.
- Walk, don't run.
- Stay on sidewalks and don't cut across yards or driveways.
- If there are no sidewalks, walk on the left side of the road facing traffic.
- Obey traffic signals.
- Stay in familiar neighborhoods.
- Make sure costumes don't drag on the ground and that you wear shoes that fit, even if they don't go with the costume.
- Wear clothing with reflective markings or tape.
- Approach only houses that are lit.
- Avoid petting animals you don't know.
- Don't wander off from your group.
- Obey the curfew hours in your town.



TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- Feed your child dinner before he/she goes "trick or treating."
- Young children of any age should be accompanied by an adult, even if there is a group of them.
- If you buy a costume, read the label to make sure it is made of flame-retardant materials.
- Although tampering with candy is rare, make sure your children know they should bring all candy and other edibles home so that you can inspect them before they eat them.
- If you have older children who go "trick or treating" without you, make sure they have money to call you in an emergency.
- Review safety rules and curfews with your children before they head out.

TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS:

- Make sure your yard is clear of such things as ladders, hoses, dog leashes, or other items that can trip children.
- Put your pets away so that they don't inadvertently bite a "trick or treatster."
- Battery powered jack o'lantern candles are safer than ones with a real flame.
- Healthy food alternatives for "trick-or-treaters" include packages of low-fat crackers with cheese or peanut butter filling, single-serve boxes of cereal, packaged fruit rolls, mini boxes of raisins, and single-serve packets of low-fat popcorn that can be microwaved later.
- Suggestions for non-food treats include pencils, stickers, erasers, or coins.
- Avoid inviting children into your home.
- Turn on outside lights so that children can see walkways and stairs clearly.



